

## MEETING RECORD

**NAME OF GROUP:** Urban Design Committee

**DATE, TIME AND**

**PLACE OF MEETING:**

Wednesday, February 2, 2005, 3:15 p.m., Room 206, County-City Building, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, 555 South 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Lincoln, Nebraska

**MEMBERS AND OTHERS**

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

**Members:** JoAnne Kissel, Third World Oforah, Dennis Scheer and Kim Todd present. Michael Eckert, Scott Sullivan and Gordon Scholz absent.

**Others:** Lynn Johnson, J.J. Yost, Mark Canney and Stacey Ault (Parks and Recreation Department); Chris Beardslee and Mark Jobman (Sinclair Hille); Mary Anne Wells (Olsson Associates); Jason Kress (Erickson Sullivan Architects); Kent Morgan, Ed Zimmer and Michele Abendroth (Planning Department)

**STATED PURPOSE**

**OF THE MEETING:**

Regular Meeting of the Urban Design Committee

Chair Dennis Scheer called the meeting to order at 3:21 p.m.

### Approval of Meeting Notes of January 5, 2005

Kissel moved approval of the January 5, 2005 minutes, seconded by Oforah. Motion carried 4-0. Kissel, Oforah, Todd and Scheer voting 'yes'; Eckert, Scholz and Sullivan absent.

### Park at Government Square (J.J. Yost, Parks Dept.)

Lynn Johnson stated that this a proposed project on 10<sup>th</sup> and O Street, to the east of old City Hall. The design is guided by a project that was located north of the old City Hall. The significant design elements are the simple cross-axial walkway and the fountain in the center. They would like to incorporate some of the architectural features from the old City Hall and Federal Hall into the design. The maiden faces from the Cornhusker Hotel will be incorporated into the fountain.

There is an interest in getting pedestrian circulation to run back and forth across the site. They would also like to create some useable green space for all the residents that are moving downtown. There is a cross-axial walkway similar to the historic design. There will be benches, drinking fountains, bike racks, and landscaping. They would also like to do some interpretive signs to incorporate some of the historic photos.

Tem and Ptah are still located on this site but should be moved to Centennial Mall sometime in February. Construction on this project will begin in the spring and hopefully will be finished in the summer.

Todd asked what kind of plants they are using. Mark Canney stated that they are still working on the plans. The Parks Department will maintain the landscaping.

With respect to the maidens, Oforah commented that he would like to see an ethnic representation or have a historical reference as to why these sculptures were selected.

Kissel commented that she likes the fact that it looks like an urban park and she likes the historic reference as well.

Todd moved approval of the project, seconded by Kissel. Motion carried 4-0. Kissel, Oforah, Todd and Scheer voting 'yes'; Eckert, Scholz and Sullivan absent.

### **Streetscape designs for U.S. Bank corner, 13<sup>th</sup> and M Streets (Sinclair Hille for DLA)**

Chris Beardslee of Sinclair Hille stated that this project entails the removal and replacement of paving as well as incorporating planters with the design. On the south side of the building, the owners expressed some concern with the extent of the landscaping because of maintenance and visibility from the street.

Beardslee presented some drawings of the proposed design. He feels there are opportunities to plant some over-story trees.

Scheer asked if the pavement will be concrete. Beardslee replied that it will.

Beardslee noted that he has contacted Public Works to see if they will use double-headed meters. This would allow more room for planters.

Scheer noted that this is one of the harshest exposures as it is very hot and windy, so growing trees will be very difficult.

Todd moved approval of the project, seconded by Kissel. Motion carried 4-0. Kissel, Oforah, Todd and Scheer voting 'yes'; Eckert, Scholz and Sullivan absent.

### **Streetscape designs for west side N. 11<sup>th</sup> St., O-P (Urban Development Dept.)**

Jason Kress with Erickson Sullivan stated that the project on 11<sup>th</sup> Street consists of concrete work cleanup, enlarging the planter beds, and bringing the site amenities up to the level of block 41. On the O Street beds, LES is considering doing some drought-free plantings. The expected completion date of this project is May.

Kissel moved approval of the project, seconded by Oforah. Motion carried with Kissel, Oforah and Scheer voting 'yes'; Todd abstaining; Eckert, Scholz and Sullivan absent.

### **Continued Discussion on Downtown Master Plan (Kent Morgan, Planning)**

Kent Morgan stated that he would like to get the Committee's input on the proposed downtown plan with respect to urban design issues. He will then bring their thoughts back to the consultants.

Zimmer commented that there is a lack of continuity among different blocks in downtown. This committee might want to mention that although continuity is good, micro-environments are also important in downtown. Todd noted that the consistency is in the pattern and not the materials used. Oforah added that he would like to see a variety of grasses used. Scheer commented that he feels the plan should not include specific plant species. He feels there is a context that is unique to downtown Lincoln. He doesn't believe that there needs to be an overriding continuity as long as we are paying attention to the contextual cues that are around us. This process is incremental, which means we can see what works and build upon that. Zimmer suggested a general guideline which states that plantings are good and should be

based on best practices and experience. Todd added that there should be an emphasis on the dense urban pedestrian nature of downtown and the things that make the pedestrian experience a quality experience.

In reference to back-in/angle parking, Scheer stated that Omaha considered this theory, but rejected it because you transfer issues with vehicles, pedestrians and bicycles from one to the other. Back-in angle parking transfers the exhaust and the lack of sight from the bicyclist and the driver to the driver and the pedestrian. Zimmer stated that from the driver's point of view in the current parking method, you are backing in to a moving lane of traffic blindly. But in back-in angle parking, you can see what is there when backing in. The backing in portion of the movement is done in a more controlled environment. There are also the advantages for the bicyclists as well as unloading the trunk.

Oforah stated that he feels the shuttle is a good idea and will make it easier for people to utilize downtown.

Scheer stressed that template design overall is not good. He noted that there are some components of the framework that are great, but it is important to integrate the urban design component.

**Misc.: Update on Neighborhood Design Standards, etc.**

Zimmer asked the Committee to consider recipients for the upcoming Enersen Urban Design Award. Lincoln Mall and the Federal Place (Old Fed Building) rehabilitation were discussed favorably by the members.

Scheer adjourned the meeting at 4:37 p.m.